

Approved For Release 2000/05/24 : CIA-RDP70-00058R000200050074-2100



FROL KOZLOV

AP Photo

## Kremlin Power Struggle?

With Nikita Khrushchev apparently on his way out as Russia's top brass, the "brain hemorrhage" reportedly suffered by his heir apparent — Frol Kozlov — is a suspicious symptom of an explosive power struggle being waged right now inside the Kremlin.

This is the judgment of leading Russian experts interviewed today by the N. Y. Journal-American following disclosure by top European Communist diplomats that Kozlov is partially paralyzed and in serious condition.

### OUT FOR SIX MONTHS

Kozlov will be recuperating for at least six months, long enough to eliminate him from any chance to replace Khrushchev as Soviet dictator, it was reported. Red diplomats did not say when Kozlov fell ill.

Many of the American experts, including Allen W. Dulles, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, immediately questioned whether Kozlov's strangely-timed "stroke" occurred before Khrushchev's

unusual hint last week that he may soon retire.

Kozlov, second-ranking leader of the Communist party, has been conspicuously missing from public view since the first week in April.

Although Khrushchev himself once named Kozlov as his likely successor, all has not been sweetness and roses between the two on crucial policy issues, experts agreed.

It was pointed out that Khrushchev may have changed his mind about Kozlov and arranged the "diplomatic illness."

In fact, the experts stressed, of late, there has been an oddly heavy stress on collective Soviet leadership—a significant sign that Khrushchev opposes handing down his awesome powers to any single individual. Moreover, the words "collective leadership" often is used as Red doubletalk, meaning that a purge of top brass is overdue.

### COINCIDENCE OR?

It may just be coincidence that Kozlov actually did fall ill in these days of Kremlin ferment. Or the highly placed Red diplomats, for reasons known best to themselves, may

just be spreading false rumors.

But, the experts say, if Khrushchev actually had to resort to banishing Kozlov with a diplomatic illness, all cannot be sweet harmony behind Kremlin walls.

Moreover, if Kozlov is still Khrushchev's choice as successor, then the sudden removal of Kozlov from the Soviet scene would be the signal for still more serious trouble among power-hungry Kremlin factions.

### SPECIALISTS' ANGLE

Prof. James H. Billington of Princeton, a famed specialist in Soviet affairs, maintained:

"It is always suspicious when critical illnesses suddenly appear at times of political ferment in a state like the USSR."

Prof. Billington recalled a "comparable case" under the Stalin regime in 1948, when Andrei Zhdanov, founder of the Cominform, mysteriously died of "illness" in the midst of the Stalin-Tito fight.

"That convenient death," remarked Prof. Billington, "also occurred at a time of considerable policy ferment and dissension within the Communist bloc."

Prof. Billington added: "The chances are better than even that Kozlov's reported illness is related to the power struggle that he, by definition, is involved in."

"It must also be involved with the debates on policy and ideology that must be going on now in preparation for the Central Committee meeting later this month."

"And at that meeting, which is obviously going to be of critical importance, Khrushchev will not, as customary, deliver the main report. It will be delivered by L. F. Il'ichev, whom Khrushchev recently rebuked in public."

"So Khrushchev publicly denigrates himself, Kozlov disappears because of a convenient brain hemorrhage, and new, relatively unknown people suddenly appear on the scene."

Eugene Lyons, a senior editor of Readers Digest and noted writer on Russian affairs, agreed, saying:

"Maybe we're due for somebody we've never heard of, or some people Khrushchev has been preparing for a collective leadership."

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Approved For Release 2000/05/24 : CIA-RDP70-00058R000200090071-2

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In the event you have not seen, attached is a copy of the interview with Mr. Dulles published in the 28 April issue of the London Times. Extracts from Mr. Dulles' Harper's Magazine article will be appearing in the next few issues of the London Sunday Times.

Clip Book